M O T I O N

Recent media reports have 'sounded the alarm' over the safety of many of the older concrete buildings in our City. A recent report on concrete buildings that were built before 1976 has asserted that, by the most conservative estimate, as many as 50 of the more than 1,000 old concrete buildings in the City would collapse in a major earthquake, exposing thousands to injury or death.

Earthquake preparedness is very important for us. We have had numerous significant earthquakes, including the earthquakes in San Francisco-1906, Long Beach-1933, Tehachapi-1951, Sylmar-1971, Whittier-1987, Loma Prieto-1989 and Northridge-1994.

Concrete buildings may look strong, but many older concrete buildings are vulnerable to the sideways movement of a major earthquake because they do not have enough steel reinforcement to hold columns in place.
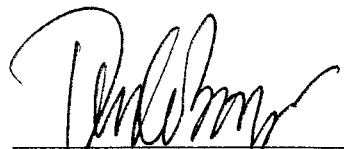
We have known about these dangers for some time, however we must also be aware of the costs involved in any comprehensive effort to require retrofitting.

On thing is for sure we are going to have another earthquake. We must prepare, and we must understand the situation to make sure we have taken the necessary and reasonable steps to prepare for that eventuality. Of course there are significant cost concerns to figure out, but it is important to understand the risks. We need to learn more and take the right steps; but there is general consensus that preparation for the next big earthquake is crucial.
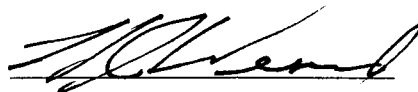
Our first step in this effort is to obtain a comprehensive and accurate assessment of the extent of the problem and the risks posed by un-retrofitted concrete buildings.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Building and Safety Department be directed to report on possible approaches to conducting a comprehensive survey of non-ductile concrete buildings (built prior to 1976) in Los Angeles which have not been seismically retrofitted, including recommendations for methods of retrofitting and related costs.

PRESENTED BY: _____

TOM LABONGE
Councilman, 4th District

SECONDED BY: _____

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